3-20-02

Valley College student celebrates 90 years

see page 3

LAVC students on zoo trip

see page 6

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The Valley Star

VOLUME 57, ISSUE NO. 3 | MARCH 20, 2002 | LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

Campus Security 'Adequate, but Not Great' Some Say

BY BEN JAURON
STAR REPORTER

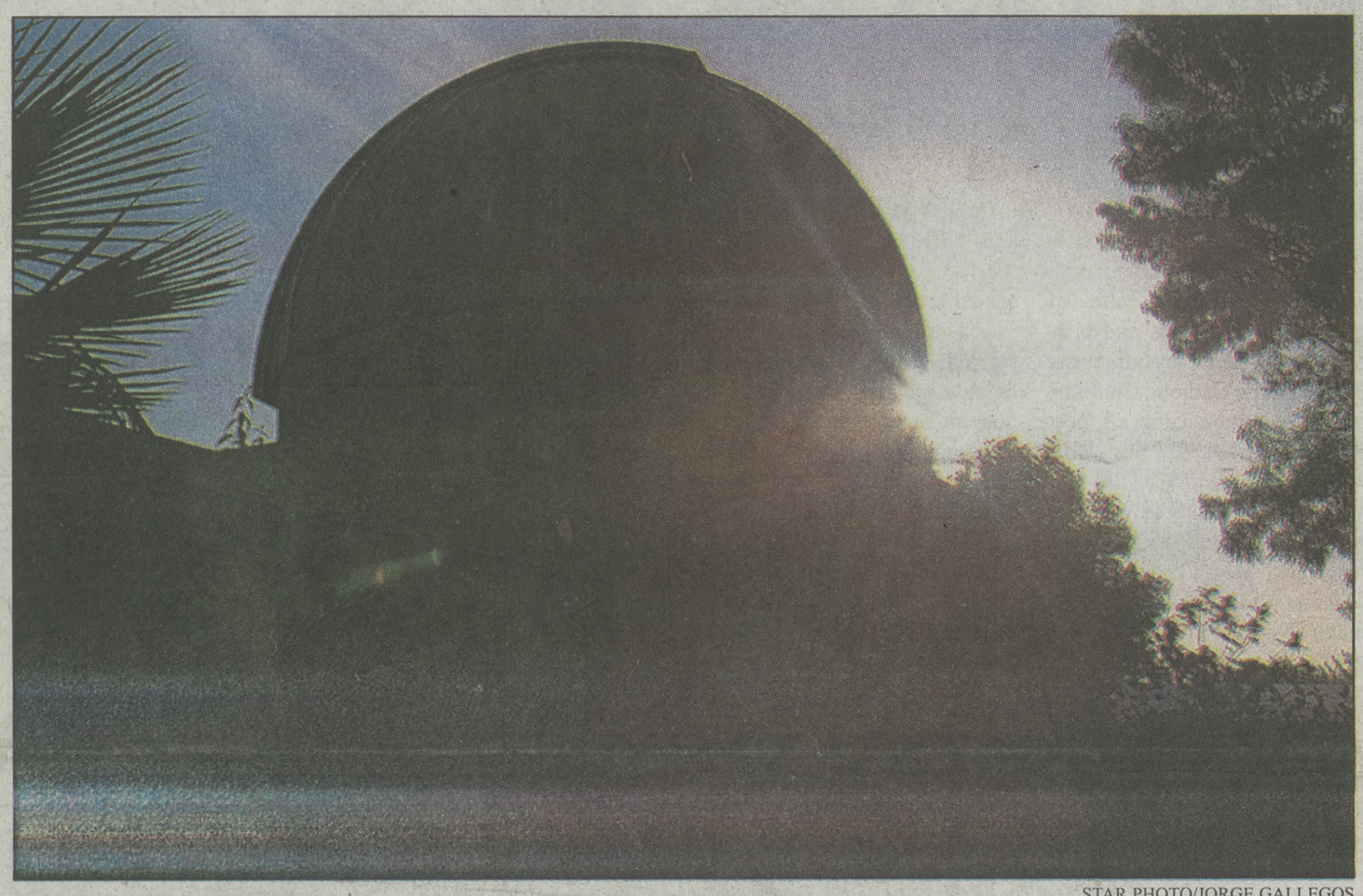
You see them everywhere: campus security. White-shirted sheriff's deputies and blue-shirted cadets, walking around campus and driving carts through the parking lots; they are everywhere, whether you want them to be or not. You see them in Bungalow 59 whenever you lose your keys or complain about a ticket you received and hopefully that's all. Though how well are they really doing their job? This article will highlight five of theses crimes as part of a four-part series on campus crime and security.

Certainly the campus is relatively safe and there's little that most students and faculty should worry about, but nonetheless, there is no small amount of crime in this institution. Sexual assaults, grand theft auto, vehicular burglary, gang-related vandalism, drug users and pushers, death threats to campus administration, hate crimes and race-related assaults, corridors dark enough at night to conceal all types of dangerous characters, custodians duking it out in the gym at two o'clock in the morning, and parking tickets, parking tickets and more parking tickets.

There were five cases of battery in the months of January and February, two of them sexual. At 6 p.m. on Jan. 9, a female student walking between the campus center and the cafeteria was accosted by an assailant who approached her from behind at a run. The assailant passed to the right of the victim, grabbing her between the legs in a "forceful way," causing her to

See **'CRIME'** on p. 4

Sunset Silhouette



STAR PHOTO/JORGE GALLEGOS

The LAVC Planetarium was built in 1963. The 50-seat facility has a 24-foot dome, an observartory, and a 16-inch-diameter telescope. Currently there are no shows planned due to budget cuts.

STAR PHOTO/SUSIE SPECK MAYOR

Deputy Sheriff Randy Tunistra goes over some plans to prevent crime on campus with office manager Nora Geller.

Budget Cuts May Leave Campus Paying the Price

BY CATHLEEN KENNEDY
STAR REPORTER

More than 20 new hire positions at Valley College for Fall 2002 may be in jeopardy with the governor's proposed budget reduction

"Next month the committee will hold a board meeting and we will go over the proposed cuts for the school," said Tyree Wieder, Valley's president. "Since last fall seven teachers have retired and we are looking to replace them. Valley College will operate on the same level. Despite the governor's proposal for millions of dollars in cutbacks on faculty and staff development programs, at this time no full-or part-time positions are being lost."

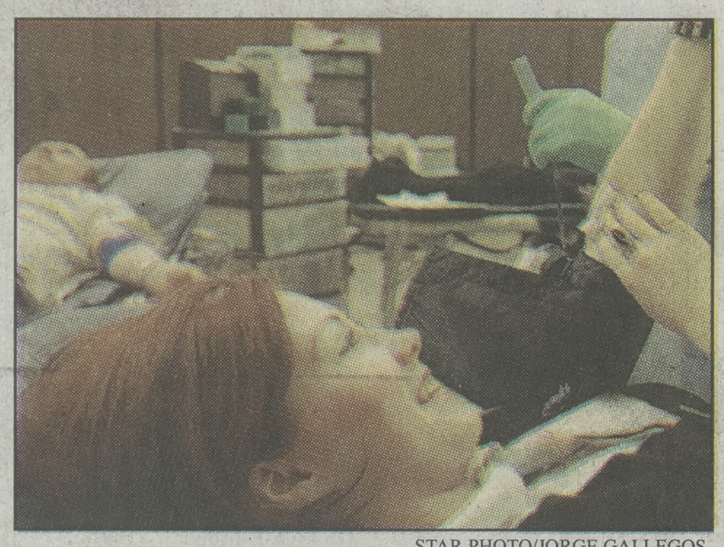
Governor Gray Davis said that California has overcome its energy crisis, thanks in part to conversation and the licensing of new power plants. The governor has offered a budget proposal that would rely on cutbacks, borrowing deferred spending, but no tax hikes. This is to close a $12. 4 billion shortfall for the state, expected over the next two years.

"The energy crisis is the main reason for all the cutbacks," Wieder said. "In the last few years Valley College has increased enrollment by 3 to 4 percent a semester. The state only pays us a certain amount and now we are at a point called unfounded growth."

The California Community Colleges provide instruction to about 1.6 million adults at 108 colleges operated by 72 locally governed districts throughout the state. The system offers academic and occupational programs at lower division levels. With the proposed budget cuts, many people will be affected.

"The proposed reductions are focused in areas not directly related to California Community Colleges core mission of providing classroom instruction," said Davis in the analysis of the 2002-03 budget bill. "Many of the activities conducted throughout these programs could be funded from other sources like private funding from regional businesses."

"Class sizes may increase slightly because of the cuts, but we like to keep it to around 35 students or to the teacher's judgment." Wieder said. Also, Wieder did not discuss the other 13 or more position that may be affected.



STAR PHOTO/JORGE GALLEGOS

Smiling Jackie Farres donates blood as part of USC Medical's bloodrive at Monarch Hall while Gyula Molnar patiently awaits for his turn.

Heater Construction Leaves Teachers and Students Boiling Mad

BY ARLENE MEJIA
STAR REPORTER

Teachers and students have complained about the noise next to the Behavioral Science building that has been going on for six months due to the reconstruction of the heating and air conditioning system.

"I go home with a sore throat," said E.H. De Vivo, a statistics teacher who teaches her classes in that building and always tries to speak over the noise.

Students close all the windows to lessen the noise, but it is still noisy, according to them.

De Vivo asked for a room change at the beginning of the semester, but all the rooms were full.

Other students however are willing to bear the noise only because they'll benefit from it.

"How can we complain about it if they are trying to improve the heating and A/C?" said student Alann Salvador. "If we ask them to stop, then we'll complain about that."

According to Thomas Jacobsmeyer, vice president of administrative services, the old boilers, which were first installed when the school was built, were taken out to be replaced by new and more energy efficient boilers.

"There were four monstrous boilers," said Jacobsmeyer. "They were so big that now the room looks empty."

Jacobsmeyer said the new boilers are much smaller and that the campus is in compliance with environmental requirements.

Prop. A Construction Plans in Early Stages

BY SERENA DANIELS AND
BEN JAURON
STAR REPORTER

The timetable of events for Valley College's Proposition A funding is only in its most preliminary stages but well underway, said Fred Parker of URS construction service, the company that was hired to oversee the project.

"Right now we are in the process of defining budget and scope, and procuring a design team to give the campus an architectural identity," said Parker, project manager.

Though he describes all the present activity as "behind the scenes," the team's trailers are expected to be moving onto the campus by the end of April. "There are many steps and it's all quite involved."

Parker's top priority is very clearly making the campus fully ADA compliant (ADA: American's with Disabilities Act, 1991), ensuring complete accessibility for disabled students complete accessibility to the school's facilities; and Parker promises no disruption to the school's current readiness. Also on the top list of priorities is destroying the current bungalow rest rooms and installing a new, 60-by-72 foot trailer unit, which will take place in the next sixty days, and building a new

See **'CONSTRUCTION'** on p. 5

Opinion

commentary

Forgive Them **Father**, For They **Know** What They Do

BY ROGELIO GARCIA

Throughout the United States the Catholic Church is being forced to confess the sins of many of its clergy members as a wave of sexual molestation allegations causes the church to alleviate many priests, pastors and bishops from their archdioceses. However, the Catholic Church is not releasing the names of those priests to the authorities. Does the church consider itself to be above the law? Should it be?

As reported in the Los Angeles Times, Cardinal Roger Mahony recently dismissed as many as a dozen priests for allegations of sexual abuse where, in most cases, the victims were young children. But local authorities say they haven't received any information regarding any of the allegations.

Whether or not you are Catholic, you should be asking yourself what gives? Should these people get away with this?

Last Saturday, the archdiocese sent priests into pulpits to read a statement from Mahony addressing the accusations but avoiding the action it will take. In the statement Mahony says, "Some press reports have implied that the archdiocese has not passed along information on suspicions of child abuse to the proper authorities." The statement was intended to inform the public that the church knows of the legal requirements to report sexual abuse.

The statement completely steered clear of saying whether or not anyone has made any attempt to contact the police of other law enforcement agencies. So the question remains: Did the church call the police? And if not, why didn't it also?

After all, one would think that the Catholic Church would have learned the cost of silence and denial, considering the horrific ***pedophilia*** scandal in Boston, the humiliating resignation of a bishop in Florida and sexual harassment settlements to victims nationwide in the neighborhood of $1 billion.

As a Catholic myself, I am hurt by the allegations; not surprised, but hurt nonetheless. It makes me angry to think that the money from collection plates goes to molestation settlements rather than to aid the needy, poor and helpless.

What makes me even angrier are the many loopholes in the child abuse laws that make it easy for the Catholic church or any other institution to hide behind tiny technicalities. For instance, if a claim of any type of abuse is made during confession, the priest can stay quiet because of clergy privilege. Also, if the crime occurred prior to 1987 but was reported afterward, then the church doesn't have to report it because of a "special waiver" granted to them prior to 1987. Yet another loophole states that if an adult walks into a church today and tells a priest that he or she was molested as child, the priest, once again, does not have to notify the police, even if the abusive priest is still on the job. The reason for this is because the law presumes that the adult can call the police themself.

Despicably, the only situation in which the priest has to call the police is if a minor files the complaint himself or herself. These laws are unbelievable. There is no way a child is going to march into a rectory and file an official complaint. The way I see it, aside from the legal requirements, the Catholic Church has a moral obligation to report anything and everything to prevent molesters from abusing again. So what steps has the church taken to ensure that these disgusting acts of abuse don't happen again?

Well, in 1988 Mahony established a policy designed, in his words, "to do all that is humanly possible to prevent sexual abuse." In his Sunday statement, he invoked that policy and vowed that his church "will not knowingly assign or retain a priest, deacon, religious, or layperson when such an individual is determined to have previously engaged in the sexual abuse of a minor." However, given that the policy goes back 14 years, how is it that as many as a dozen accused molesters were still on the payroll? Did the Vatican just now hear about them? According to sources, the church has acknowledged six molestation complaints in the past five years alone, but it's anyone's guess what, if anything, became of those priests.

Are they still hearing confessions? It's very possible.

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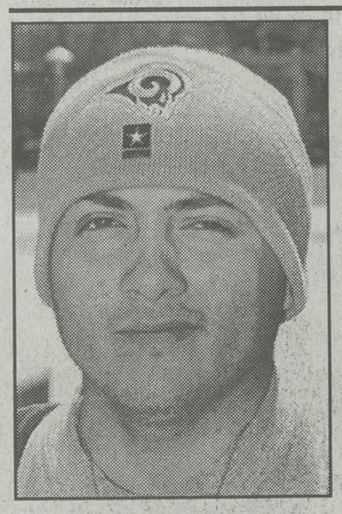
CampusView

Should the Catholic Church publicly release the names of the priests accused of child molestation?

BY JORGE GALLEGOS
STAR REPORTER

STAR PHOTOS/JORGE GALLEGOS

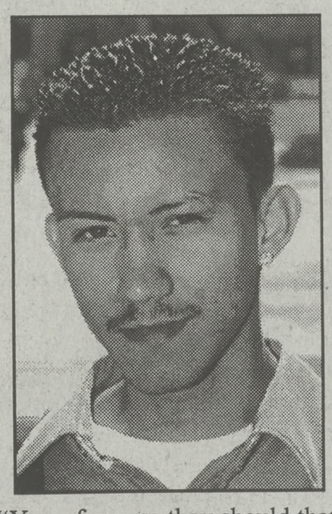


"Yes, religion is very valuable. If you are giving them your trust, you should know who they are."

Joseph Medina
Undeclared

"Yes, they should be released because it's not right for the church to cover their bad behavior."

Eleni Sefyu
Undeclared



"Yes, of course they should that way they would be ashamed of what they did."

Jose Majano
Undeclared

"No, because it's nobody's business "

Kimberlt Dean
Music

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Please include your name and telephone number
Letter may be edited. Deadline: Friday 4:30 p.m.

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Valley Life

Campus Scene

BY SKYLAR LENOX

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Career transfer center is open to all Valley College students wishing to either transfer to a four year college or change their career. Hours: Mon. and Tue. 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Wed. and Thur. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in administration 126. For more information call (818) 947-2646

★ The Writing Center
Free tutoring for LAVC students. Humanities 100 and 102, for more information call (818) 947-2810.

★ Joseph La Rosa
Pianist, Thurs. March 21, 11:30 a.m. Music Recital Hall.

★ LAVC Guitar Quartet
Thurs. April 4, 11:30 a.m. Music Recital Hall.

★ Jennifer Kelly
Cabaret Singer, Thurs. April 11, 11:30 a.m. Music Recital Hall.

A Veteran of Life Eager to Learn

BY LISA TOBIN
STAR REPORTER

Francis Martin refused to leave the pool. There was no lifeguard on this particular day and the sheriff told her to leave.

"I'm not going to leave this pool," Martin said. "I've paid for this class and I'm staying. You do what you have to do, and I'll do what I have to do."

The sheriff, shrugging his shoulders, backed away.

Martin is Valley College's oldest student and last week about 40 friends, teachers and classmates celebrated her 90th birthday with a surprise party in the North Gym last week.

The tables were arrayed with colorful flowers and place settings. Homemade dishes were carefully prepared and a birthday cake was waiting. She was led to believe she was going out to lunch to the Castaway Restaurant in Burbank with her good friend of 35 years, Mary Bullard. That was not the case.

Bullard, the decoy, said she had to stop by the college to drop off some papers. While doing so, they walked into Martin's big bash. In sheer surprise, with an ageless smile, she became enraptured in the hugs of her greeters.

Martin was born on March 13, 1912, in Brooklyn, N.Y. She worked until she was 83, mostly as a legal secretary. She mentioned she had worked for an architectural firm that had built the famous

See **'OLDEST STUDENT'** on p. 5

STAR PHOTO/MARCY PETRIQUE

Valley College student, Francis Martin is all smiles on her 90th birthday. A surprise birthday party was thrown for her in the North Gym on March 13.

STAR PHOTO/SUSIE SPECK MAYOR

Student models Ilona Gerbakher and Sophia Portier look stylish in latest spring fashion trends.

Valley College Students Spring Into Fashion

BY CATHLEEN KENNEDY
STAR REPORTER

With spring in the forecast the only thing that can't be predicted is the fashion on campus. Valley College is behind on the trail of trends.

Los Angeles is one of the trendiest spots in the country, which means Hollywood is always on the trend-tracking alert. It's no surprise that people look upon us when they need to know the latest and greatest in fashion and style.

You can be fashionable or stylish. There is a difference. Fashionable people obsess over the latest trends; stylish people want to look good, but whatever the case you need to pick one. School campuses like Santa Monica and UCLA pride themselves on being the Reese Witherspoons, Legally Blondes on campus. But you do not have to go to that extreme.

It's harder to get good taste than to get money, so you don't have to have an expensive budget. If you like designer clothes, keep in mind that most designers get their ideas from thrift shopping. "I don't like to conform to everyone," said DeAngelo Bethea, a Valley student wearing a vintage t-shirt that reads, "I'm nearly famous."

"I got this t-shirt on Melrose at a store called Slow," she said. "I like shopping vintage."

Like Bethea, today's designers are brilliant shoppers who shop vintage. The designers simply find something from the past and reproduce it. You can probably find original versions of the styles designers are recycling at a fraction of the cost of the new item if you start thrift shopping.

Another way to find out what's going on is to look at magazines and see what your favorite celebrities are wearing. Valley student Erica Chavez has definitely done her part. Dressed in pink snakeskin stiletto boots, a pink hair scarf and a lace shirt, she may be one of the most stylish girls on campus. "I love my new velour burgundy jump suit," Chavez stated. "Rhinestones, crystals and belts are also very hot now."

The way you dress or package yourself is the one thing over which you have absolute control. In these days of mass-marketing techniques you know that when a product lacks eye-appeal, it gathers dust on the shelf. What you wear and how you look can make a difference of moving steady or just rocking back and forth.

THE TOP TEN SPRING CAMPUS TRENDS FOR women

1. HIP HUGGING DENIM JEANS
2. BIG BELTS WITH TASSELS
3. ROXY BACKPACKS OR BOOK BAGS WITH ADDED DETAILS
4. RHINESTONE BUTTERFLY NECKLACES AND JEWELRY
5. LACE AND PEASANT LOOKING SHIRTS
6. ONE-OF-A-KIND VINTAGE THRIFT SHOP FINDS
7. SKECHER 4 WHEELERS TO CRUISE THE SCHOOL
8. 80S FLASHBACK FLASHDANCE SWEATSHIRTS
9. OLD SCHOOL, SLIP ON, OR MARY JANE STYLE SNEAKERS IN BRIGHT COLORS
10. MOTOROLA TWO-WAY PAGERS OR TALK-ABOUTS

THE TOP TEN SPRING CAMPUS TRENDS FOR men

1. VINTAGE OR NEW CONCERT T-SHIRTS
2. WINDBREAKER OR TRACK JACKETS
3. ARMY BAGS OR ADIDAS BACKPACKS
4. DARK, FADED OR DISTRESSED DENIM
5. UNBUTTONED SHIRTS AND OPENED COLLARS
6. WORKOUT, OLD SCHOOL OR SLIP ON SNEAKERS IN BRIGHT COLORS
7. THRIFT STORE, ONE-OF-A-KND FINDS
8. V-NECK SWEATERS
9. GPS HAND-HELD TRAVELLING COMPASSES
10. BUCKET, FLOPPY OR VISOR HATS

A New Café con Sabor

BY SERENA DANIELS
STAR REPORTER

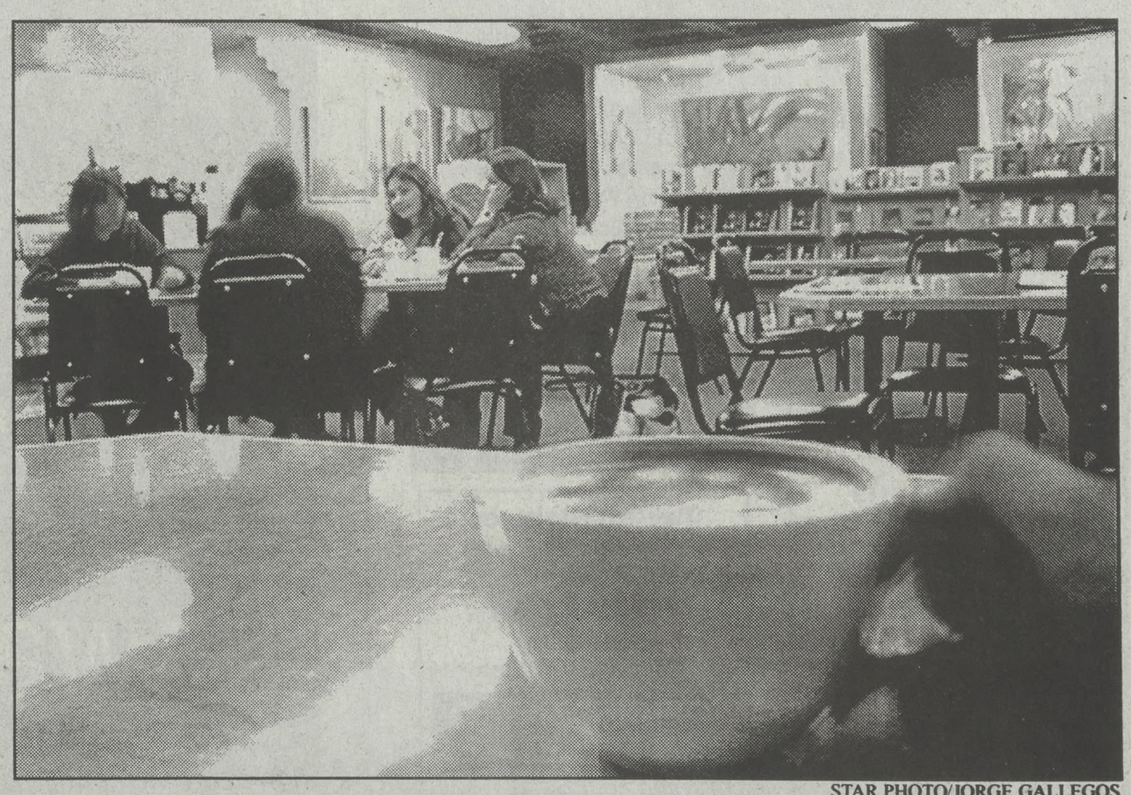
If you take a look around the communities of San Fernando and Sylmar, you'll notice that the vast majority of residents there are Latino. There are plenty signs of commerce: carnicerias, the local body shop, and plenty of schools. But as far as a cultural center, a place where the people who represent that community can meet and share their ideas, those types of places are scarce. In fact, it's really hard to find a place like that anywhere in the northeast San Fernando Valley.

"We wanted to enhance the intellect of the people in the neighborhood," said Luis Rodriguez, author and co-founder of Tia Chucha's. "There are a lot of talented people who came out of the woodworks. We just wanted to have a gathering place where all these artists could meet freely."

Tia Chucha's Café Cultural sits in the corner inside a strip mall parking lot, and if you blink twice you'll miss it altogether. But once you step inside, you realize just how special this place is and how hard it is to file it into one category. The first thing you notice is the artwork. The walls are covered in portraits, landscapes and sculptures from Mexico and Guatemala to Chile and Peru. In the middle of it all is where people come to lecture. A middle-aged man with long hair could be sitting in the audience, sipping his café mocha, while a student is talking into the microphone about the evolution of the Mexican. On the shelves are titles such as "Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.," written by Rodriguez and "The Loves of Ricardo," by Ricardo Sanchez. Everything in Tia Chucha's can be compared to any Border's Books or a trendy coffee shop on Melrose Avenue. The main difference is that this particular café adds flavor both to your everyday Starbucks and to the city of Sylmar.

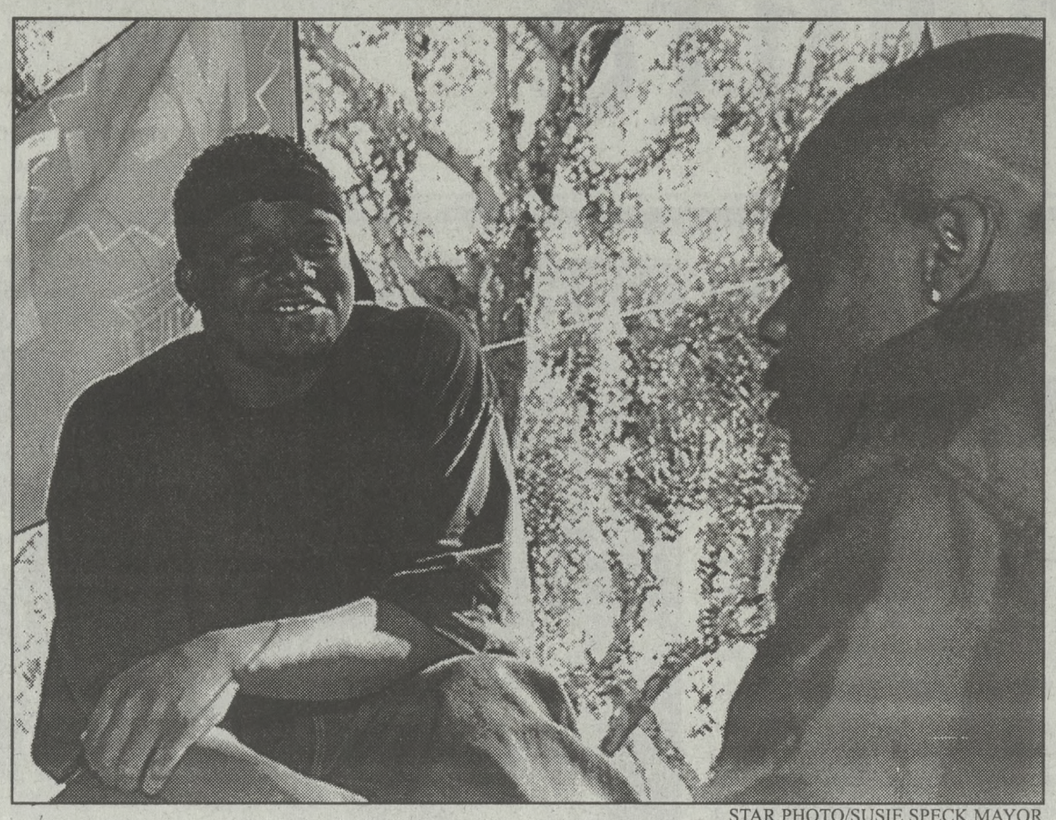
Rodriguez, his wife Maria "Trini" Rodriguez and Enrique Sanchez formed the café/cultural center. Rodriguez said that while living in the northeast San

See **'CAFE'** on p. 5



STAR PHOTO/JORGE GALLEGOS

If you are looking for a place to sit, drink coffee and find out about Chicano history, Tia Chucha's Cafe Cultural is the place to go.

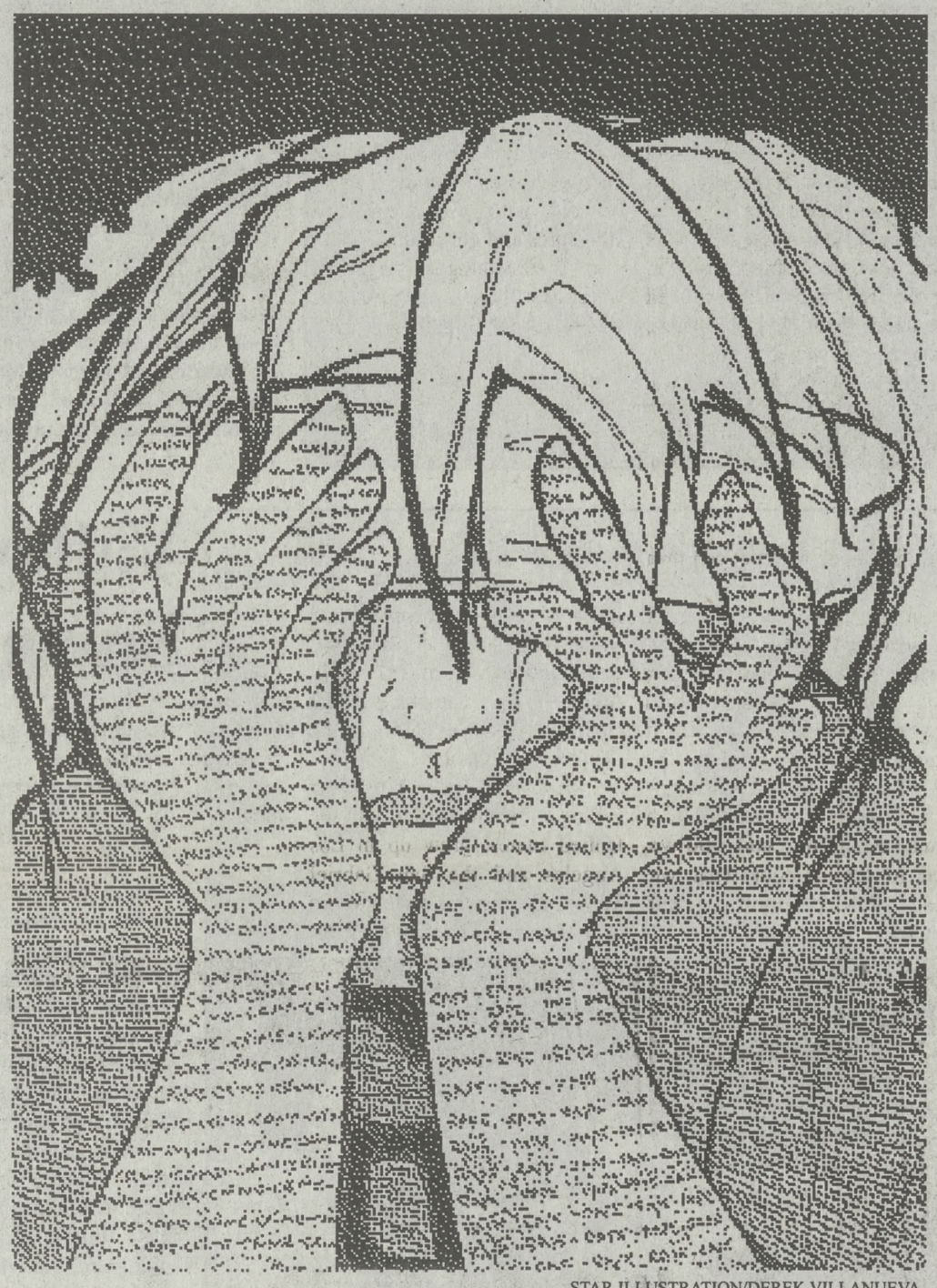


STAR PHOTO/SUSIE SPECK MAYOR

Vince Henderson still manages to smile while talking to his friend, Avery O' Neal, even though he had his brand new Chevy Tahoe pick-up truck stolen from the campus parking lot on Feb. 20th.

CRIME STATISTICS AT LAVC
FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

1 (each)	BURGLARY (OTHER), HATE CRIMES, FELONY WARRANTS
2	SEXUAL BATTERY
3 (each)	GRAND THEFT, VANDALISM, GRAND THEFT AUTO, BATTERY
4	BURGLARY (AUTOMOTIVE)
15	MOVING VIOLATIONS
1615	PARKING VIOLATIONS



STAR ILLUSTRATION/DEREK VILLANUEVA

'Crime' *continued from page 1*

lose balance, and then continuing on his way.

Numerous female students voiced concerns regarding the campus's lack of lighting at night, but Eric Cordero, a Communications and Kinesiology major, best summed up the worries. "I see the Sheriff's around, they're very prevalent. "My only concern is that there should be a little more at night, especially in the parking lots. It's a little scary, I don't care how much of a guy you are. Overall, security is adequate, but not great."

Another significant incident of battery that occurred on campus took place between two custodians in the North Gym at 2 a.m. on Feb. 26. According to the sheriff's report, the two men had a dispute over a mop. The accounts of the two suspect/victims on the report, as well as both of their sworn statements, were contradictory, but after the shoving match one custodian went to the hospital complaining of neck pains though there was no visible injury.

"I see the sheriff's around they're very prevalent. My only concern is that there should be a little more light at night. Especially in the parking lots."

-Eric Codero, Valley Student

History major Luis Lopez says, "I see a lot of cops walking around, I feel safe at school now, especially since Sep. 11. It's cool for the school, I've never seen anything bad; schools everywhere are safer now."

Grand theft auto and vehicular burglary is another major concern of campus law enforcement. There were seven incidents of vehicular-related thefts in January and February, the statistics for March not yet being available. The most common occurrences take place in the daytime, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; though no parking lot is completely safe, one should be particularly cautious in lots A and B; and the most frequently victimized automobiles are Honda Accords.

One student who had her car broken into last summer claims that she feels safer because it hasn't been since, however, many feel that more security would never hurt, especially for the sake of female students after dark.

More than 1500 parking tickets have been issued in the first two months of this year, two months that campus authorities claim were slower than usual. More than $23,000 in parking fines were issued in the month of February alone, the money going to various parties, including the school's coffers. No one parking lot is more susceptible to ticketing than any other, but students should be particularly cautious parking on Mondays and Tuesdays, as those are the days when the most tickets are issued.

"If people don't pay, they can be towed," says vice president of administrations, Tom Jacobsmeyer. "We have a real problem with that."

Vandalism is another crime that damages Valley College sporadically, and it takes many forms, from graffiti to breaking and entering and from attempted burglary to hate crime.

The most significant event of vandalism thus far this year occurred in Bungalow 57, the reading lab, on the evening of Feb. 28. The suspect or suspects broke in through the window and scattered books, paperwork and other odds and ends in the building onto the floor; luckily the computers were bolted to the desks and remained unmolested. "It's too bad Simba [the pet cat that resides in the reading lab] wasn't in to scare them away," says Ann Harootyan, instructional assistant for the reading lab. Along with the damages, most of which Harootyan had to clean up herself, two tape recorders with headphones, valued at $30 each, were stolen, as well as a $1 bill from the desk drawer. Campus authorities were unable to dust for fingerprints because the window frames of the bungalow are wooden, and wood is too porous to leave prints.

One act of vandalism that was classified as a hate crime was reported on Feb. 21 in the men's restroom of the Business/Journalism building. The words "Beaner Killer" were written in black marker on the wall of the third stall; the damages were estimated at $30 and the offensive marks were quickly removed.

Campus crime is no small issue, but don't worry, college Sheriff Randy Tuniestra, team leader of campus security, and his cadre of peacekeepers are on the job.

"We deal with every issue independently," says Sheriff Tuniestra, and Jacobsmeyer, gives the sheriff's department a full vote of confidence as he claims that they have done an "excellent job supporting students, faculty and staff." Undoubtedly, the current sheriff's deputies have much broader and more extensive training and experience than their predecessors, the campus police force that they replaced in January of 2001, as well as better equipment and numerical strength. There are still two armed security officers, just as before, but now there are three or four additional officers on campus at all times with electric carts, electric and man-powered bicycles, as well as the standard foot patrols. As is the nature of the beast regarding law enforcement, though, their true benefit cannot be accurately gauged in dollar signs because there is no way to account for how much crime the deputies are preventing by their mere presence, visibility being the major issue.

If any student feels uncomfortable or frightened in the evenings while attending classes because of the lack of lighting, Tuniestra recommends that students produce a cellular phone and pretend to be talking on it; sheriffs are available as walking escorts at nighttime.

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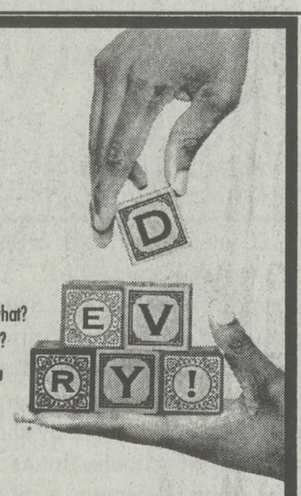

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'Oldest Student' continued from page 3

flat iron building in the middle of Time Square. She now lives alone and spends much if her time, when not in the pool, writing letters to Congress on behalf of the many ecological associations.

" This keeps me busy, and my mind occupied," Martin said. "You have to keep your mind working and thinking about things. The best way to keep busy is to do things for other people." She describes herself as an active citizen.

> *"The best way to keep busy is to do things for other people."*
>
> **-Frances Martin**
> **Valley College's**
> **90-year-old student**

Although Martin has hip and knee problems and uses a cane, she appears otherwise to be in good shape. Bright and articulate, she still drives a car and swims four times a week. She has been a student of Dee Stark, an aqua aerobic instructor, for the last 15 years. Stark said Martin is " great, young at heart, energetic and raring to go."

Martin is adamant about staying in the pool, because it is therapy to her. She said that she doesn't want surgery, choosing exercise instead.

"The pool keeps me going," she said. "That's the best exercise there is."

Frances has been going to the pool ever since it opened. She repeatedly contributed to the building of the pool, ten dollars out of her weekly $80 salary.

Classmates call Martin feisty, opinionated and a determined woman. Fellow swimmer, Sheila Engelberg said that a letter campaign by Martin helped get hot water to the showers in the women's gym, a problem that had gone on for years. Martin wrote a petition and gathered signatures and got results.

"If something isn't right, all we have to do is ask Frances to write a letter," Engelberg said.

'Construction' continued from page 1

facility for both the financial aid and computer science facilities, which currently are too small to aptly serve all the students needs.

"The computer science facility leaves a lot to be desired," says Ron Azin, instructor. "This room is both a classroom and a lab room, and it creates tension among the students." Azin also commented on how the computer science staff doesn't have office space like the other faculty branches.

A communications plan is in the works to keep students, faculty and staff informed of the master plan as it develops, especially regarding of major shutdowns and equipment coming onto campus. As a component to this, the Valley Star will be printing articles regularly to keep the student body abreast of the situation as it develops. At this point in the process, an architectural master planner is going to be chosen for the project by Friday, and the URS team is assessing the noise and dust problems that heavy earth-moving equipment is inevitably going to cause. There will be major changes to the campus by the upcoming fall semester; however, heavy construction is not expected to start for another year.

> *"The computer science building leaves a lot to be desired."*
>
> **-Ron Azin,**
> **Instructor**

"We're going to do our best to communicate to students and faculty by constructing bulletin boards, using the Valley Star, and communicating to DSPS," said Parker.

URS will be hiring students for the project in the area, but don't hold your breath. "I can't handle a flood of resumes right away," says Parker. He doesn't know how many students will be hired, when, or for how long at this point, but students are welcome to attend the monthly town hall meetings that are being held regularly. The point of contact for such concerns on campus is Pat Calder, the chair of the working space facility, who can be reached through her voice mail at (818) 947-2337 or by leaving a message in her mailbox in the campus administration building; paper being the preferred method to voice or electronic communication. The project team says that they would like students, faculty and staff to "be very proactive" and they will entertain ideas and suggestions from everyone interested and all comments will be taken into consideration.

Visit LAVC'S Homepage
www.lavalleycollege.com

'Cafe' continued from page 3

Fernando Valley, he noticed that the community hasn't really made any improvements over the years and that in the past, local residents would have to travel to Hollywood or Los Angeles to enjoy a different atmosphere.

"We saw that the community has not really gotten much better," Rodriguez said. "So we tried to think about what we could do to make some changes."

In the summer of 2000, the three started talking about creating a place where people could share their intellect, their artwork and a cup of coffee. In January Tia Chucha's Café Cultural opened its doors to the residents of Sylmar.

Rodriguez, one of the best selling Chicano writers in the United States, grew up in Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley. He met his wife, whom everyone calls Trini, who grew up in Pacoima, and they both moved to Chicago for several years. Rodriguez said that he has owned a number of cafes in Chicago and that they have been a success. He is hoping that Tia Chucha's will furnish the same results and looks forward to seeing more places like it in the area.

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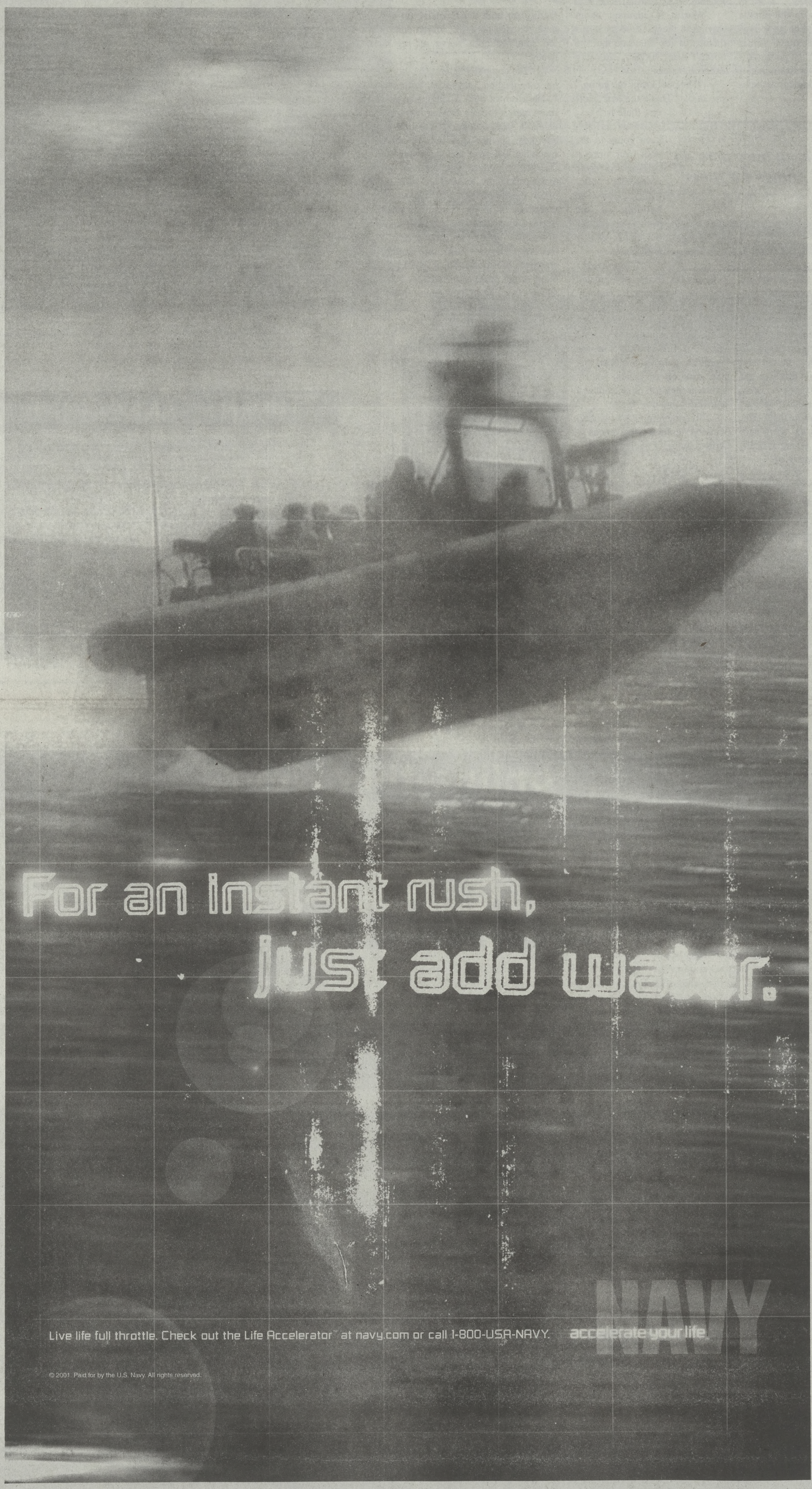
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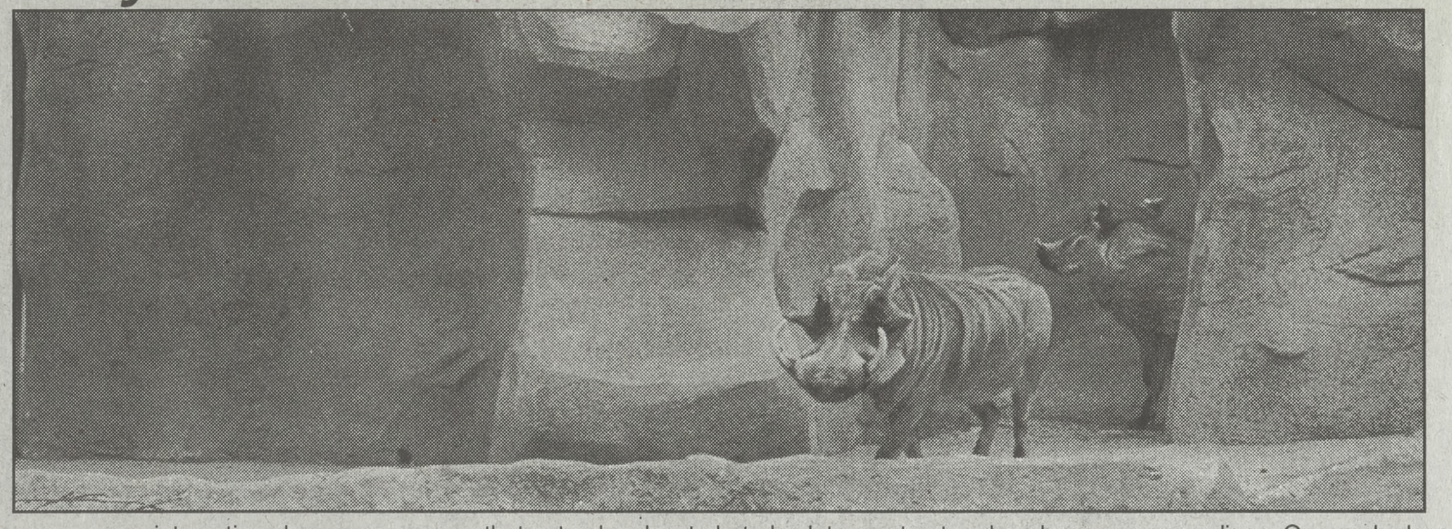
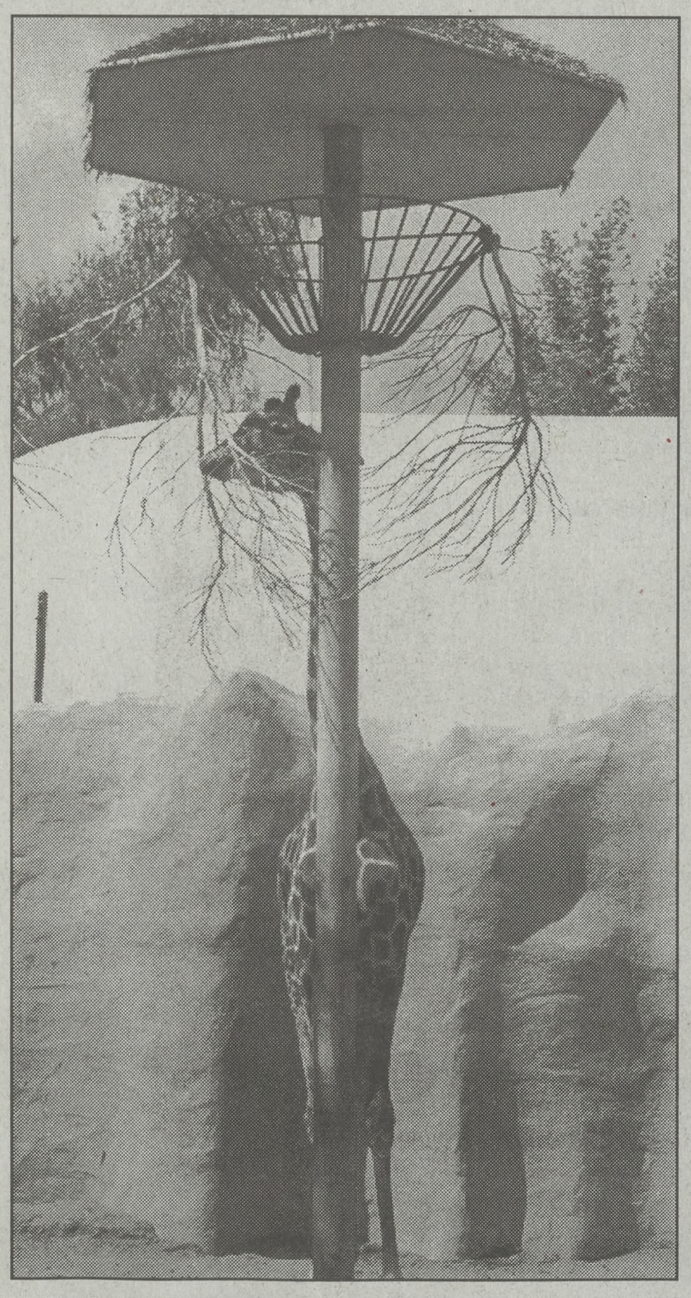
Gallery

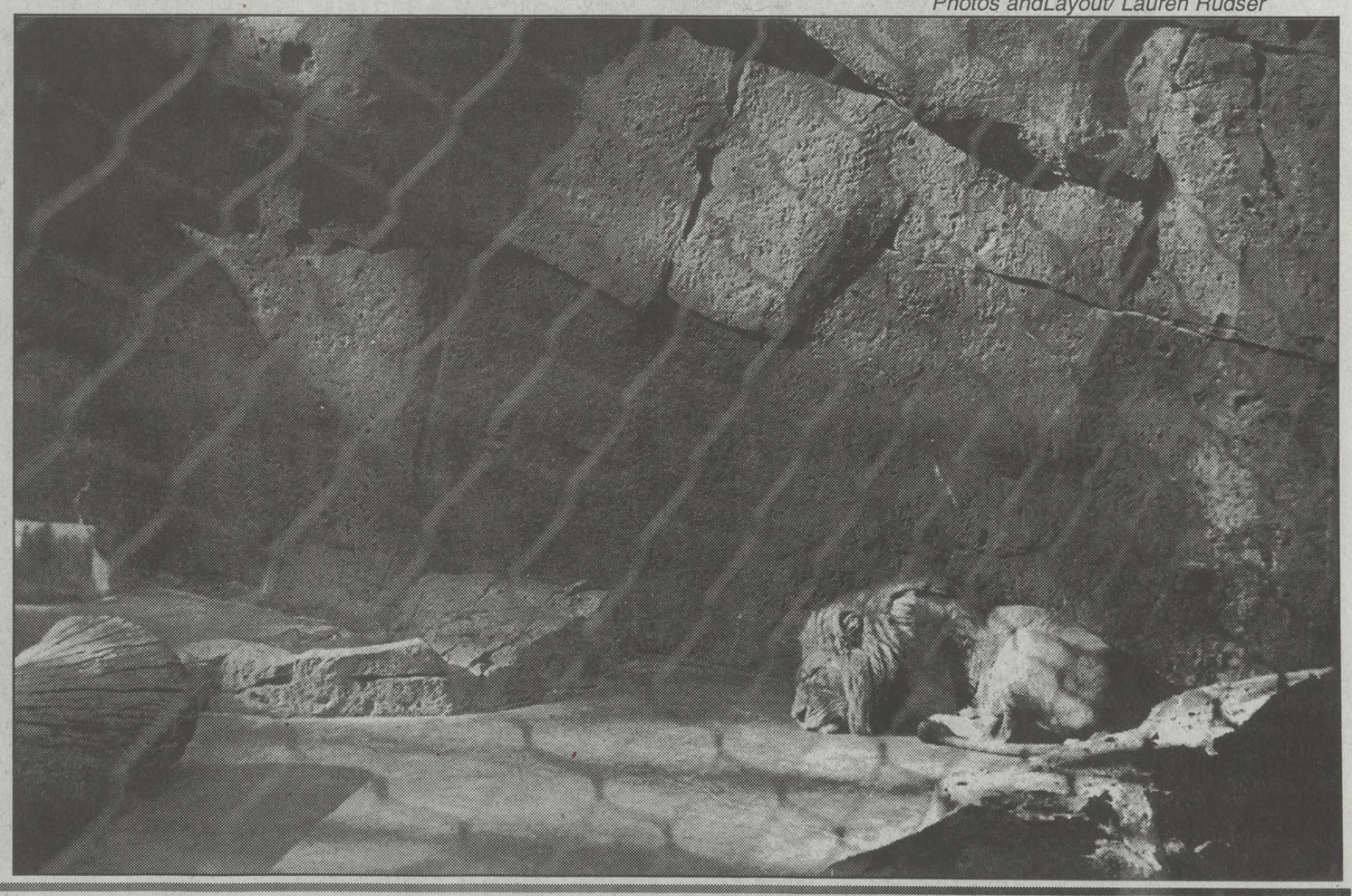
Not Just Another Day at the Zoo



There are many interesting classes on campus that not only educate but also let us get out and explore our surroundings. One such class is the oceanography lab class. A day trip to the San Diego Zoo, one of the many field trips to choose from, not only gets students into the zoo, but also takes them behind the scenes and up close with the animals. The animals of this world famous zoo are as diverse in size and origin as the population of Valley College. There are thousands of different species of birds, hundreds of reptiles and dozens of mammals ranging from the "average" zoo fare of Asian elephants and hippos to the more obscure Javan Bantengs, a wild Indonesian cattle, and Chacoan Peccaries, a distant relative of the pig dating back to the ice age. The zoo itself is huge and hard to see in one day. They are constantly renovating the exhibit areas from the original, sterile, small concrete enclosures built during the Roosevelt work project effort, to Bio-climactic zones that more closely replicate the animal's original habitat. The zoo's focus has also changed from its original goal of providing entertainment, to one of education and conservation. It is also one of the fastest growing, with hundreds of births a year. The San Diego Zoo boasts being one of only two zoos housing pandas, with the only pandas to successfully reproduce in captivity. (Shi Shi, meaning "rock rock," is pictured above.)

Photos andLayout/ Lauren Rudser





Sports

Lady Monarchs' Future Bright After State Defeat

BY PEDRO OLIVERA
STAR REPORTER

The Valley Monarchs women's basketball team capped off a remarkable season in which they finished with a record of 30-6 and made their first trip in three years to the State Championships.

Even though they suffered a disappointing 78-66 loss to San Joaquin Delta College in the Quarterfinals of the Championship Series, they still have plenty to be proud of.

The Lady Monarchs' 30 victories put them in a three way tie for second most, behind only to Ventura College's 34 wins. Ventura won the State Championship for a third consecutive year.

With the great season Valley had there was bound to be plenty of individual awards and accolades for the Lady Monarchs and their coaching staff. After only three years at the head coaching position, Mike Muro has been named the Southern California Coach of the year. Muro was an assistant coach on the last Lady Monarch team to reach the State Championships. He took over as the head coach the following season and helped keep Valley on a championship level.

Muro was not the only member of the Valley team to receive an award. Sophomore guard Markia Derby was named a First-Team All-State selection. Teammate Liliana Ramirez was named to the All-Southern California Regional Team.

Derby and Ramirez, along with point guard Itricia Ewells, led the team all season long. They went through pre-season tournaments, an 11-1 conference record, and the Southern California Regional playoffs.

The Lady Monarchs' road to the State Championship was not an easy one. It took a last second shot on Friday Mar. 8 to earn a 69-68 victory over Orange Coast College. The victory catapulted them into the State Championship Series.

After receiving a first round bye, the Lady Monarchs struggled through their second round game against Chaffey College. Although they won the game 63-56, they had to battle their way to get there.

Valley came out flat and it seemed to take them a while to find their legs. The action quickly picked up and Valley became far more aggressive.

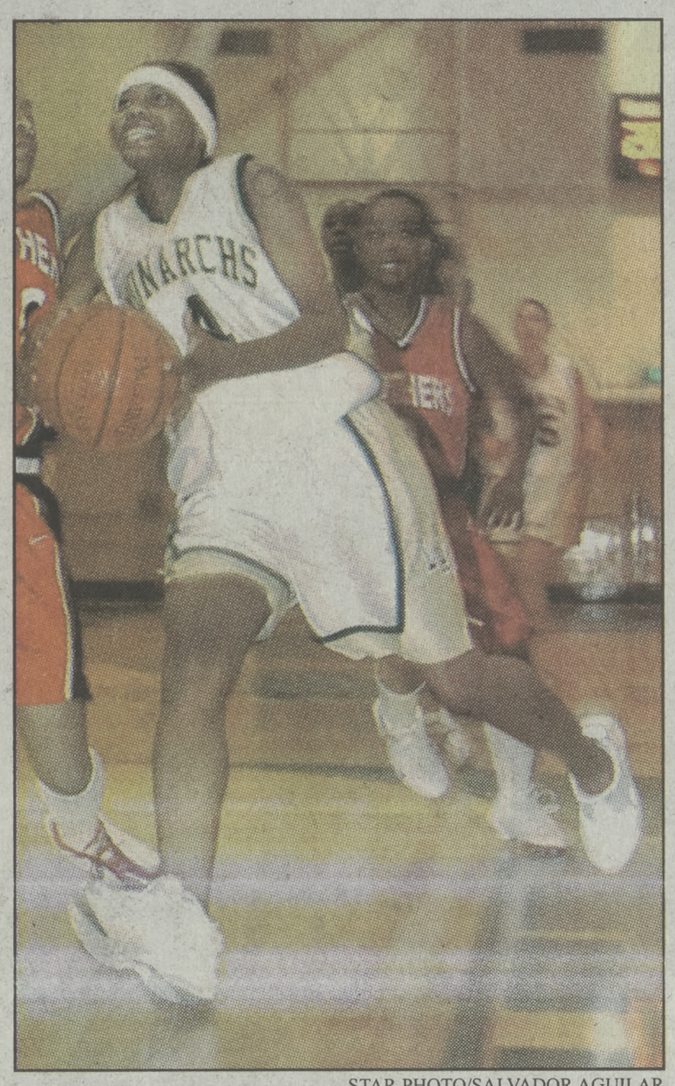
Led by Derby, who had a game-high 27 points, the Lady Monarchs began taking the ball to the basket and won the game at the free-throw line.

Overall it was a great season for the Lady Monarchs. It was the kind of year that can establish a program into a state power. If Valley can get an influx of young talent from the high school ranks to mesh with the returning talent, Valley can have a similar run at next year's State Championships.

Ryan Abrahams, the starting shooting guard on the men's basketball team which went 12-0 in conference play, was named to the All-State Honorable Mention list.

STAR PHOTO/DANIEL COHEN

David Lopez of the Monarchs slides safely at homeplate at Tuesday's game at Valley's baseball field. The Monarchs lost to Bakersfield 14-9.



STAR PHOTO/SALVADOR AGUILAR

All-State player Marika Derby (#4) drives to the hoop in Valley's first round game against Chaffey College.

Women's Soccer Now Headed to Valley College

BY RICARDO MIRANDA
STAR REPORTER

Valley College will soon have a women's soccer team.

"As a first year team," head coach Alberto Bru says, "I don't expect to have as good a team as other junior colleges that have had a [soccer] team for a while."

But Bru, who hopes to recruit as many team members with prior soccer playing experience as possible, says he wants to build a strong team.

And, with a sponsorship from Nike, the team is getting a great start.

"We are fully funded in equipment," he says. "I order what UCLA orders." The team already has uniforms, soccer bags and balls available.

Soccer practice will begin soon and the team will begin playing this August. While Valley does not yet have its own men's soccer team, a men's team at Los Angeles Mission College allows students from Mission, Pierce and Valley colleges to play.

Bru says he has been active in soccer for a long time and is impressed with the support he has received on campus.

"Now all we are looking for are quality players," he says.

All women interested in playing soccer should contact coach Alberto Bru to begin practicing. Contact him at (818) 778-5523 or leave info in the North Gym office #2.

Sports Schedule

Men's Baseball

Mar. 21 - Bakersfield @ Bakersfield, 2:00 p.m.

Mar. 23 - Santa Barbara @ Valley, 2:00 p.m.

Mar. 30 - Alumni @ Valley, 1:00 p.m.

Apr. 2 - Ventura @ Ventura, 1:00 p.m.

Women's softball

Mar. 21 - Cuesta @ Valley, 2:30 p.m.

Mar. 26 - Hancock @ Hancock, 2:30 p.m.

Mar. 28 - Glendale @ Valley, 2 p.m.

Apr. 2 - Ventura @ Valley, 2:30 p.m.

Men's and Women's Swimming

Mar. 22 Pierce @ Pierce, 2:30 p.m.

Mar. 27 - Citrus @ Valley, 2:30 p.m.

Track & Field

Mar. 23 - Northridge Invitational @ Northridge, TBA

Talkin' Sports

PEDRO OLIVERA
SPORTS EDITOR

Spring is almost upon us. Although you can't tell by Sunday night's cold shower, the days are getting longer and warmer. With spring comes the greatest sporting event of all time.

The NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament is never lacking in the dramatics. Every year there is always at least one David who topples Goliath, an under-achieving team who comes together just in time to make a run to the Sweet 16 and beyond.

The tournament is so frantic that it goes by the nickname synonymous to the crazy style of play, March Madness. Anything can and usually does happen during the month long, 65-team tournament that will culminate this season with the championship game on April Fools' Day in Atlanta, Ga.

This year has been no exception to the stirring play of the tournaments of the past. The Madness has already run wild on this field of Final Four contenders.

There has already been a number one and a number two seed eliminated. Teams from conferences such as the Missouri Valley and Mid-American have beaten teams from the mighty Southeastern and the rugged Big 12.

This seems to happen every year. The top teams from the top conferences refuse to play the mid-majors. They'll invite them to play at their house, where they can use their home court advantage to overwhelm the smaller school, but refuse to travel. The big schools have no excuses when it comes time for the Final Four.

There is no dodging the likes of Kent State and Southern Illinois in the tournament. Most of all, you play these mid-majors on a neutral court. That is one of the many reasons you see so many upsets in the early rounds.

Another reason is teams simply overlook their opponents. Take USC for example: they were the number four seed in the South Regional and playing a school no one has ever heard of, 13th seeded North Carolina Wilmington. USC was rapidly becoming a favorite pick among office pools across the country to not only make the Sweet 16, but also to upset the defending champion and number one seed Duke.

Clearly USC came in looking ahead to their potential Sweet 16 match-up with Duke. Before they knew what hit them, 'SC was down 20 points. They valiantly fought back but expended their energy in regulation and had nothing left for the overtime period.

Give all the credit in the world to UNC Wilmington. They played an inspired basketball game and wanted the victory more than the Trojans. But if USC had shown up, they would be gearing up for Duke instead of watching on TV.

Gonzaga was the darling of the tournament. Every one was taking up their case because the selection committee low-balled them with a number six seeding. Perhaps they were distracted by the hype, but whatever the case may be, they didn't make it out of the first round.

UCLA is making its annual run through the tournament. It's almost like clockwork in Westwood. UCLA will start the season with a lot of hype and a lot of promise. They'll stumble in the non-conference portion of the season and everyone will call for head coach Steve Lavin's job. The Bruins will then beat a top ranked team in the country and everyone will rejoice. UCLA will then have a humiliating loss in conference and recover just in time to go to the Sweet 16 and save Lavin's job, at least until next season.

Lavin is the Rodney Dangerfield of the coaching ranks. He gets no respect. Lavin is one of only two coaches in the country to make the Sweet 16 five out of the last six seasons, the other being Coach K at Duke. He consistently brings in some of the top talent in the country. Say what you will about him during the regular season, come tourney time his teams are always ready to play.

Or as he put it, " December is for show, March is for dough."